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If taxes on the property instanced by Mr. Adams valued at \$40,000 (lot, \$10,000 ; building, \$30,000) were entirely removed from the building and assessed only on the lot, the owner would obviously be relieved of three-quarters of his burden, provided the rate of taxation remained the same.

But Mr. George proposes to increase the rate on city land until all of the net income which it produces to its owner is absorbed, leaving him, however, free to exact and keep, clear of taxation, as much rent for his buildings as the law of supply and demand will permit.

As, ignoring extreme cases, a net income of from four to seven per cent. is derived from city land, that would be the rate of taxation under Mr. George's plan.

Now a four to seven per cent. tax on that \$10,000 lot would probably yield as large a sum as is derived from building and lot combined under our present system.

The real estate Croesus of Mr. Adams's imagination has one-quarter of his property in land and three-quarters in buildings. It is more likely that the real Croesus has one-half in land, taking into consideration the vacant lots he is pictured in Mr. George's writings as "holding for a rise."

Now the larger the value of his land, as compared with his buildings, the heavier would the George tax fall upon him ; hence, Mr. Adams's anxiety lest the land Croesus escape his share of taxation under the George plan is needless.

A. E. COTTIER.

III.

THE SUFFRAGE PARADOX.

OF late years there has been a growing suspicion among thoughtful Americans that there is something the matter with universal suffrage. We have always heard that our government is a government of the people, that it is founded upon universal suffrage, and that it is the best government that the world has ever seen. Hence it seems to follow that universal suffrage must be right. We may differ according to our party affiliations as to what candidate ought to be counted in after the people have exercised their right of suffrage, but we all agreed that we could not have popular government without universal suffrage. And yet when a property owner finds that as a result of universal suffrage his property has been confiscated by taxation, or when a creditor finds that universal suffrage has enabled his debtors to cheat him by paying their debts in debased currency, he begins to fear that there may be something in the practical working of universal suffrage which is not quite right; and, if he is a very bold man, he may ask himself in the secrecy of his back bedroom, with the doors and windows tightly shut, whether after all suffrage should not be restricted to men who can read and write or who own taxable property.

Before making any effort to modify our present system of universal suffrage, we ought surely fully to comprehend its relation to popular government. It may seem a rash assertion, but it is nevertheless true that as a nation we have no clear idea of what constitutes popular government, and therefore cannot properly understand the relation that universal suffrage bears to it. We are accustomed loosely to define popular government as a government of the people, and to assume that the people govern through the medium of universal suffrage. So far is this from the truth that no government which rests upon universal suffrage can possibly be a government of the people. It is a government of a part of the people, and bears the closest possible resemblance to an oligarchy. An oligarchy is a government of the few, or the minority ; a government based on universal suffrage is a government of the majority. Where forty-nine per cent. of the

people govern there is an oligarchy; where fifty-one per cent. govern there is the sort of popular government which results from universal suffrage. The two are separated by a space so narrow as to be scarcely visible.

The American government is purely a government of the majority. In practice it is, of course, modified by means of returning boards; but in theory, the majority rule absolutely. The wishes of the minority are not of the slightest consequence, unless there is an attempt to assert them by revolution. We established universal suffrage expressly in order that the majority should rule. We allow the minority to vote, but it is with the full understanding that their votes are powerless. What right have we, then, to call our government a popular government? The very fact that it is based upon universal suffrage proves that it is not a popular government. It is a government of fifty-one per cent. of the voting population, and it differs from a loathsome oligarchy only by two per cent. Nevertheless, such is the strange influence of the word "universal" upon the American mind that it is the almost unanimous belief among our people that a government based on universal suffrage must be a government of the whole people.

When we have once arrived at the truth concerning the nature of our government, and the relation between it and universal suffrage, we can proceed to discuss the desirability of substituting limited for universal suffrage. As it is an axiom that our government is the best government the world ever saw, whatever changes we make should be in harmony with our governmental system. The change which most naturally suggests itself would be to relieve the minority of the useless labor of voting. There is an enormous amount of nervous and muscular force annually wasted by the minority in deciding for whom to vote, and in going to the polls. It has been estimated by an eminent mathematician that this force thus utterly wasted would be sufficient, if converted into units of work, to raise a weight of many thousand pounds several inches above the surface of the earth—a result which, as all scientific persons know, would be of incalculable service to the hungry and wretched millions of our race. Why should this force be thrown completely away? It is idle to say that the minority has always hitherto voted, and should, therefore, continue to vote, or that their voting has some mysterious symbolic significance. These are the arguments by which the pompous ceremonies of the effete monarchies are defended. They are unworthy of a free and progressive country. We should discard everything that is meaningless and useless, and there is nothing which is quite so useless as the impotent ballots of a minority.

It may be asked how can we distinguish the majority from the minority except by the test of the polls. Nothing could be simpler. Who constitute the majority in every nation,—the ignorant or the intelligent? Unquestionably the intelligent are the minority and those who are ignorant are the majority. We have here an infallible test by which we can ascertain what citizens belong to the majority, which has the sole right to rule, and what citizens belong to the minority, and should therefore be spared the mockery of voting. If the intelligent minority fancy that their votes ever have the slightest influence on a successful election, they are the victims of a delusion which they should hasten to end.

If we honestly wish to carry out consistently and with the least labor the theory that the majority should rule, the theory on which our whole structure of government is built, we must limit the privilege of voting not to property owners, or to men who can read the Federal Constitution, but to men of undoubted ignorance. No person should be allowed to vote who cannot prove that he is unable to read or write, or who, in case he unfortunately lacks that qualification, cannot give satisfactory evidence of his belief that the government can make a

dollar out of paper or out of seventy-odd cents worth of silver. Men possessing these qualifications belong indisputably to the majority, and if we confine the privilege of voting exclusively to them we carry out the theory of our government and cut off that meaningless excrescence, the voting of the minority.

This, then, is the change which should be made if we wish to be consistent upholders of universal suffrage. The more earnestly we believe in universal suffrage, the more earnestly we ought to try to limit the exercise of suffrage to the ignorant. This may seem a paradox, but it is a great political truth. We have built our government on the broad principle that the ignorant shall rule the intelligent. Let us show ourselves consistent by relieving the intelligent of the fruitless burden of voting.

W. L. ALDEN.

IV.

HALLS FOR PUBLIC MEETINGS.

It is eminently desirable that in every city there should be one great hall capable of holding such numbers of citizens as usually attend out-of-door assemblies, and that the cost of hiring of such hall should be moderate. But moderate cost is a thing unattainable if the hall be reserved for public meetings only; it must be employed for other purposes. Now every considerable city needs a commercial exchange of one kind or another—some great centre for the transaction of business on a large scale. So too every city needs a theatre, concert-hall, or what not. If one public hall could be used for these several purposes, its hire one evening for a public meeting, a theatrical exhibition, an operatic performance, etc., need not cost, as it does now, as much as will pay for many days the interest on the capital invested in its construction. Probably no great public hall in any of our cities is ever used, on the average, oftener than three nights in a week. Thus three nights a week must pay the expenses of the building during seven days and nights. But let one of the "exchanges" (or more than one) occupy the hall daily during business hours—10 to 3. Then let it be used for lectures, theatrical exhibitions, public meetings during the evenings, and on Sundays morning and evening for religious meetings or sacred concerts or lectures, and the burden of expense to be borne by each of these part-tenants, will be comparatively light. Of course the project is not free from problems and difficulties, but a competent architect may be trusted to meet these and to overcome them, planning an interior that will serve equally well for all purposes. After the architect has done his part, Yankee ingenuity will provide a way of transforming almost instantaneously the "bear garden" of the exchange into the theatre auditorium, or into the place of religious assembly. The certainty of adequate income from a structure of this kind would justify the most liberal expenditure for an absolutely fire-proof building.

J. F. G. JAMESON.

V.

"COMMUNISM AND PROTECTION."

THE February edition of the NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW published an article entitled "Communism and Protection," by W. M. Fishback, in which the following extraordinary conjunction was made:

"Communism, Socialism, *Henry Georgeism*, and all that family of dogmas, have . . . one common essential principle: That it is the right and duty of Government to seize, by law, the fruits of the labor of one man and divide them with others."